Real Women Have Curves Worksheet

1. Describe the *stasis* in the play: where, when, who, what, etc. in a paragraph.

The play is set in a tiny sewing factory in East Los Angelos in 1987. Five women, Ana, Estela, Carmen, Pancha, and Rosali work there. Estela, the daughter of Carmen and sister to Ana, has a court date for a petty crime, and will be deported if she shows up. However, she doesn’t have enough money to pay her lawyer in order to get the court date cancelled. Therefore, the women begin to work furiously to complete an order that will give Estela the money she needs by the end of the week.

2. What is the *intrusion*?

The intrusion is when Rosali faints from the heat of the room. With one less person to help work on the dresses, the women are then unsure if they will be able to complete the order and provide Estela with the money that she needs.

3. What is the *unique factor*?

Because Rosali is not a documented immigrant, she refrains from going to the hospital out of fear that she will get deported.

4. What is the *dramatic question* that should be answered by the end of the play?

Will Estela be able to finish the dresses and get paid before her court date, or will she get deported? Will Ana get into college?

5. Provide an illustration of the *two kinds of exposition* that the play has in it.

Almost all of the general information about the play is transmitted through conversation among the women while they work. However, Rosali doesn’t tell the other women that she has been taking diet pills until after she gets out the hospital. Also, Ana doesn’t tell the women about her bad date with her crush until after he gets arrested for drugs.

6. Identify the most *theatrical moment* in the play and of what importance it seems to be.

7. List some of the *themes* of the play.

The empowerment of women

The harsh life for Mexican immigrants into the US

The strong bonds of friendship among the women that is displayed by their playful banter, yet seriousness in working to help one another

The challenges poor immigrants face in obtaining some sort of formal education

8. What do the principal characters *want* and what are some *obstacles* that stand in the way of them getting what they want?

Ana wants to achieve a college education at NYU, but she doesn’t have money to pay for it and is trying to obtain a scholarship. Estela wants to finish the order of dresses so she can pay to not meet in court because if she goes to her court date she will get deported.

9. Describe some possible *images* in the play and how does the *title* help us understand the play.

The constant sweat of the workers symbolizes their dedication to each other and bonds of friendship that can be forged through adversity. The title “real women have curved” reflects the theme of the story that women should not be objectified and therefore should not be judged based on their physical features such as weight.

10. Briefly define the *family relationships* that are examined in the play.

The sister relationship between Ana and Estela is very strong, as well as the relationship that both have with their mother. All of the women are very close because they share a common pride in the adversity they have faced together. Ana wants to obtain a college education in hopes that she can help the other women out.